



# Discount drug cards: Savings for seniors

A message from Representative Ben GiaQuinta

MILLIONS OF AMERICAN SENIORS have incomes too high to qualify for Medicaid, yet struggle to pay for essential medications that Medicare does not fund. Several pharmaceutical companies have developed discount cards for qualifying seniors. Details about some of the cards are given below. Pharmacy participation varies. Please contact the companies listed for more information.

## GlaxoSmithKline Orange Card



- Eligibility: Medicare recipients earning less than \$30,000 per person or \$40,000 per couple; no existing prescription drug coverage.
- Benefits: Average savings of 30 percent on all GlaxoSmithKline drugs.
- Key drugs covered: Avandia (diabetes); Advair, Flovent and Serevent (respiratory illnesses).
- To apply: Call 1-888-672-6436.

## Eli Lilly and Co. LillyAnswers Card



- Eligibility: Medicare recipients earning less than \$18,000 per person or \$24,000 per couple; no existing prescription drug coverage.
- Benefits: \$12 fee for a one-month supply of a Lilly retail drug.
- Key drugs covered: Evista (osteoporosis); Humulin and Humalog (diabetes); Prozac (depression); Zyprexa (schizophrenia).
- To apply: Call 1-877-795-4559 or visit [www.lillyanswers.com](http://www.lillyanswers.com).

## The Merck Patient Assistance Program

The Merck Patient Assistance Program provides Merck medicines free of charge to individuals with no prescription drug coverage and an income below \$18,000 or below \$24,000 for a household. The recipient must have exhausted other options, including HMOs, Medicare, Medicaid, Veterans' assistance, etc. For more information call 1-800-727-5400.

## The Pharmacy Care One Card

The National Association of Chain Drug Stores is offering a free Pharmacy Care One Card, which will give low-income seniors access to various discount programs offered by pharmaceutical companies. For more information call 1-703-837-4244.

## Novartis Pharmaceuticals CareCard



- Eligibility: Medicare recipients earning a particular annual income; no existing prescription drug coverage.
- Benefits: \$12.00 flat fee per prescription for individuals earning up to \$18,000 and couples earning up to \$24,000; 25 percent to 40 percent discounts on all Novartis drugs for individuals earning \$18,000 - \$28,000 or \$24,000 - \$38,000 per couple.
- Key drugs covered: Diovan, Lotensin, Lotrel (high blood pressure); Exelon (Alzheimer's); Lescol (high cholesterol); Miacalcin Nasal Spray (osteoporosis).
- To apply: Call 1-866-974-2273 or visit [www.novartis.com/carecard](http://www.novartis.com/carecard).

## Pfizer Share Card



- Eligibility: Medicare recipients earning less than \$18,000 per person or \$24,000 per couple; no existing prescription drug coverage.
- Benefits: \$15 for each 30-day supply of every medicine that is covered.
- Key drugs covered: Lipitor (cholesterol); Norvasc (high blood pressure, angina); Zyrtec (antihistamine); Aricept (Alzheimer's).
- To apply: Call 1-800-717-6005 or visit [www.pfizerforliving.com](http://www.pfizerforliving.com).

# A quick look at seniors and prescription medications



Approximately 38 million Americans are eligible for Medicare coverage, which does not include an outpatient drug benefit. Of these, approximately 13 million do not have any type of coverage for prescription medications.



Medicare recipients without prescription coverage spend an average of \$546 per year for outpatient medicines according to the Center for Medicare Service.



While seniors currently represent approximately 12.6% of the U.S. population, a disproportionate 38% of prescriptions are for seniors.



According to the Wall Street Journal, an estimated 80% of retirees use a prescription drug every day.



The National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) recently reported that older Americans “use prescription medicines three times as frequently as the general population and have the poorest rates of compliance with [medication] directions.”



Patient compliance with drug therapy deteriorates as the number of drugs taken increases. Because 25% of the elderly use three or more drugs daily, the elderly are particularly at risk.



Twenty-eight percent of hospitalizations of elderly Americans are due to noncompliance with drug therapy (11%) and adverse drug reactions (17%).

Information from Novartis and GlaxoSmithKline.  
For more on this topic visit [www.novartis.com](http://www.novartis.com) and [www.gsk.com](http://www.gsk.com).

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